



ACEbc *The Association for Community Education in BC*
www.acebc.org

Building partnerships to strengthen children, youth, families and communities throughout British Columbia

About ACEbc
www.acebc.org

Advocating for Community Education and Community Schools **ACEbc 2010: Now is the Time**

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[Directory of Community Schools in BC](#)

Videos of Community Schools in action:

Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education: [Schools as the Centres of the Community](#) on The Charlie Rose Show, March 2009 (6:22)

[Community Schools: Opening Doors of Opportunity](#) Children's Aid Society, New York (9:24)

Marty Blank, Director of the Coalition for Community Schools
[Comments on 2008 National Forum in Portland](#) (3:11)

Community leaders from all sectors of society recognize the importance of building healthy, resilient, sustainable learning communities. Now is the time to focus on prevention and capacity building strategies that will reduce future costs. Now is the time to increase cross-ministry funding and to integrate services. Now is the time to enhance the social infrastructure in British Columbia, community by community.

With over three decades of experience, ACEbc believes that **now is the time** to increase public awareness and support for Community Education and Community Schools. We believe there is widespread support for the **Core Values of ACEbc**:

- **Prevention** is more cost effective than intervention;
- **Partnerships and multi-ministry funding** are essential to best support children, youth and families;
- **Public involvement** is an essential component of community education;
- **Investments today** in lifelong learning and capacity building are critical for long term community sustainability.

Whether your background is in education, social services and health care, civic or provincial government, business, or in non-profit organizations, we are asking for your support for Community Education and Community Schools. [Ideas for Action below](#).

21st Century Community School Models Community schools across BC are more varied today than those from the early days in the 1970s and 80s. Some examples of the many supportive school districts and different models of community schools today include:

- Surrey, BC's largest district, which has created "hub" schools and established dynamic, large scale partnerships with city government and national non-profits such as United Way.
- Vancouver, which has created an umbrella community school structure so that all schools are served by teams of coordinators, counsellors and other support staff.
- Burnaby, which for decades has maintained a city-school district partnership unique in BC.
- The Sunshine Coast District family of five community schools, which is working together on a long term strategic plan.
- Kootenay-Columbia, which closed Blueberry Creek as a day school in 2002, but has continued to support community school programming, first in Blueberry Creek School and now in additional facilities. Their wide range of programs include family literacy, preschool and day care programs.
- Abbotsford, which recently expanded long standing community school programming in partnership with active Community School societies.

1. A Role for Education Partners

Surrey Community Schools Partnership Resources:

- [Surrey Presentation at Harrison Conference](#)
March 6, 2009 (PDF document, 2.6 MB)
- [Surrey workshop with Abe Fernandez, New York Children's Aid Society](#), Feb 2009
(PowerPoint, 1.4 MB)

[Neighbourhood Learning Centres](#) - BC Ministry of Education

- Parent associations - at school, district and provincial levels
- Teachers, support staffs, coordinators and other community education staff
- Principals and school-based administrators
- Local Boards of Education, The BC School Trustees Association, Superintendents, Secretary Treasurers and District Administrators

Supportive and involved communities contribute to the success of students and therefore to the goals of all educational leaders. Some key contributions that community schools make to the work of each education partner include:

- **They provide programs for all ages** – from before birth to five year olds ('zero to fives'), through school age, to life long adult learning. Recently in BC, this range of programming was included in the expanded mandate of Boards of Education. [Read Sue Lamb's description below of the "seamless" experience of a young child in Halfmoon Bay Community school.](#)
- **They coordinate and integrate services** from public and non-profit agencies and maximize support for children and families.
- **They assist the regular day school to meet expanded expectations.** The education system, from classroom teachers and support staff through to elected trustees is expected to meet an increasing range of responsibilities. Community schools, through **multi-ministry funding and non-profit partnerships** can help to coordinate and distribute those expectations among a variety of partners.
- **They meet community needs before and after the regular school day and year round.** For decades community schools have offered comprehensive programs for early intervention, day care, after school care, community literacy, etc. In recent years BC has introduced many new programs such as StrongStart, Ready Set, Learn, etc. The coordination and support inherent in a community school make it easier to implement these new programs.

Articles and research on community schools for education partners

- [Making the Difference – Research and Practice in Community Schools.](#) "Evaluations examined the impact of 20 community school initiatives across America, focusing in particular on outcomes that directly affect student learning. Research confirms what experience has long suggested: Community Schools work." Coalition for Community Schools, 2003. [Executive Summary and Full Report - search the site by title].
- [ACEbc AGM 2008 – Researchers Support Community Schools.](#) This short summary of a panel presentation has many points relevant to community schools in BC. Participating were Dr. Clyde Hertzman, Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, and Dr. Bruce Alexander. Moderated by Michael Clague, Jan. 2008.
- [Schools as Centres of the Community.](#) Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education is interviewed on The Charlie Rose TV Show, March 2009. This video is a clear vision of the direction the United States is going with community schools. Duncan was the CEO of Chicago Public Schools, home to the largest community schools initiative in the nation – 150 community schools. These public schools have been transformed into the centers of their communities, with campuses open mornings, afternoons, evenings, weekends and into the summer. See also [Coalition for Community Schools.](#)

Articles and research on community schools for education partners (continued)

- The BC provincial government recently initiated [Neighbourhood Learning Centres](#), by providing extra capital for new schools and major renovations to ensure community space is included. This web site has links to many resources - in BC and beyond.
- [Early Years Study 2: Putting Science into Action](#). This is a major Ontario study of early childhood development and its significance to society. McCain, Mustard, and Shanker, 2007. See also the work by the [Human Early Learning Partnership \(HELP\)](#) based at UBC, directed by Dr. Clyde Hertzman.
- [BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils](#). This is a large provincial organization with many resources.

2. A Role for Social Services and Health Care Providers

Prevention-based programs and coordination of services are essential components of long term planning for those working in social services and health care. Community schools can be a very effective local facility to coordinate integrated services for all ages - young children and their families through to seniors. The [Human Early Learning Partnership \(HELP\)](#) at UBC has an extensive list of links on their web site. Many other organizations such as [The United Way](#) and [First Call](#) have extensive resources.

3. A Role for Political Leaders

Leadership now by provincial MLAs and civic elected representatives to address prevention and increase coordination of services can pay extraordinary dividends to society over the long term.

Research shows that investing today in community education is cost effective and will pay dramatic dividends - economically, politically, and socially - in the future. Building social capacity and community resilience is essential to a sustainable future, especially in challenging economic times. Community schools can play a key role in coordinating and delivering services at the neighbourhood level, increasing effectiveness and efficiencies of services and use of facilities.

Articles and research on community schools for political leaders

- [School Plus](#) – a province wide community school initiative in Saskatchewan. “Every school ... serving as a centre for social, health and other services for children and their families.” Ministry of Education, Saskatchewan.
- [Investing in Community Schools – An Economic Perspective](#). This paper cites four key reasons for investing in community schools: 1) They implement prevention strategies at the local community level; 2) they leverage core funding by creating partnerships; 3) they coordinate multi-ministry and non-profit funding; 4) they run programs year round for all ages, maximizing the investment in public facilities. ACEbc, 2007, 2010.
- [Economic Aspects of the Development and Prevention of Criminality Among Children and Youth](#). Search the Justice Institute of BC web site for this 2010 study supported by the Vancouver Board of Trade. The study reinforces the long term economic payoffs to society of prevention programs. The Board of Trade study complements the 2009 study [15 by 15 - A Comprehensive Policy Framework for Early Human Capital Investment in BC](#) by the [Human Early Learning Partnership \(HELP\)](#) at UBC.
- Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl at UBC has done related research in [Middle Childhood Inside and Out](#), 2007 and the [Middle Years Development Index \(MDI\)](#), 2010. Visit the [United Way of the Lower Mainland](#) web site and search by Schonert-Reichl or by the titles.

4. A Role for Business Leaders

Demographic changes and extreme economic challenges are creating new stresses for business. Community education partnerships can raise skill levels and contribute to liveability, benefiting

businesses and residents. Business leaders must plan long term, in contrast to shorter term political cycles, so the future-oriented core values of ACEbc fit well with business interests. The goals of community education are shared by proponents of Community Economic Development, Smart Growth, and many other community development organizations.

Articles and research on community schools for business leaders

- Several valuable resources on economics and prevention are described in the previous section – the [2010 Vancouver Board of Trade study](#), [HELP studies](#), [Schonert-Reichl's work](#), and the ACEbc report [Investing in Community Schools - An Economic Perspective](#).
- [Community Futures](#) “focus on building local capacity as a means of facilitating growth from within communities. Community Futures believe that economic development can be strengthened through a locally driven process by which individuals, groups and communities take charge of their own future ...”
- [Smart Growth BC](#) “Smart growth principles ensure that growth is fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible and recognizes the connections between development and quality of life.”
- “Sustainable community development aims to integrate economic, social and environmental objectives in community development.” [The Centre for Sustainable Community Development at Simon Fraser University](#).

5. A Role for Like-minded Organizations

Most community schools develop partnerships with non-profit organizations. These partnerships effectively leverage funding from each partner to provide resources, programs and services. A common feature of these inter-agency partnerships is the capability to access multi-ministry funding and coordinate services through the local community school.

Articles and research on community schools for like-minded organizations

- [United Way](#) “invests in prevention-based programs that make communities stronger. We are focused on bringing about positive, long-term, sustainable change to living conditions in our community. Our strategy includes a broad range of activities and strategic partnerships that target the causes of social issues that make many among us vulnerable.” Check out the media resources on the United Way of the Lower Mainland web site.
- [First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition](#) “is a cross-sectoral, non-partisan coalition. Our coalition is made up of over 80 provincial organizations and 25 mobilized communities. In addition, we have a network of hundreds of community groups and individuals.”
- The [BC Association of Family Resource Programs](#) (FRP-BC) “is a not-for profit provincial organization dedicated to raising the awareness of the importance of community-based Family Resource Programs.”
- The BC [Representative for Children and Youth](#) “supports children, youth and families who need help in dealing with the child welfare system, and advocates for changes to the system itself.” A major B.C. study released Feb 23/09 shows that although children and youth in care are at higher risk of becoming involved with the youth justice system, early interventions targeted at risk factors can change the paths of these vulnerable adolescents.

6. Ideas for Action

- Learn more about Community Education and Community Schools. Visit the [ACEbc web site](#) where you will find many resources and links, including the U.S. based [Coalition for Community Schools](#). The federal Education Secretary, Arne Duncan's vision of the future is clear in the video [Schools as Centres of the Community](#).
- Contact your school district to find out if there are local community schools or plans to implement them. The ACEbc [Directory of Community Schools](#) in BC lists all districts in BC and provides direct links to community schools.

- Contact your MLA and the Premier to gain support for **multi-ministry funding** and increased support for community schools to better meet the needs of children, youth and families in BC. [BC Government Directory](#).
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Conclusion Each group addressed in this document has a vested interest in the basic values of Community Education and Community Schools:

Educational leaders want students to reach their potential and preschoolers to be ready for school;

Social Services and Health Care leaders know the importance of early intervention and prevention;

Political leaders want to leave legacies of sustainable communities;

Business leaders need economic accountability and healthy, life-long learning communities for employees and markets;

Non-profit Organizations cannot meet the growing needs of children, youth and families alone.

Everyone wants to maximize the value of tax dollars and donated funds.

Think about how your particular group or association can help support or promote community schools in BC. **ACEbc would be pleased to assist** - contact emails are listed above.

NOW is the time.

Sue Lamb, Coordinator of Halfmoon Bay Community School, Sunshine Coast District, SD #46:

Thoughts on Zero to Fives: “There is something very powerful about a pregnant mom being connected here at school through parent and tot programs, during the “zero” stage. When that child is born they are already “known” by their community and when that community is connected to school that child is then “wrapped” around in a whole new way. The sense of belonging and attachment that child has to their neighbourhood school translates into a beautiful thing, a child who truly knows this is their school from zero on.”

Thoughts on seamlessness from a child’s perspective: “Another thought I have is related to integration of non profit and public services. I think it might be worth articulating how this feels from a child’s perspective. When services are integrated as you see more commonly in community schools, a child’s world is very seamless. For example, here in Halfmoon Bay on Monday a child may come to Parent and Tot (Community Services Society Program); the next day they may go to preschool (Halfmoon Bay Childcare Society Program); on Wednesday they may go to Roots Parent and Tot Yoga (a volunteer run Community School program); on Thursday they may go to Kicks for Kids (a parks and rec. program); on Friday they may go to go KinderSPARK (an SD#46 program). That child has actually accessed programs of 5 different organizations, but to them it is all at Halfmoon Bay Community School. Often times the same staff interact with them between programs. Integrating staff between programs works well for us being so rural. Add to that the fact that they may have 1 or 2 siblings accessing school age programs at the same site and often at the same or overlapping times – this creates a sense of comfort and safety hard to duplicate. Again, this translates into a strong attachment to school for the child and the family.”

Web Links

“ACEbc 2010: Now is the Time” and all other documents mentioning ACEbc are available from the ACEbc web site at www.acebc.org

If you received a print copy of this document, here are the main web addresses that will not show on paper:

BC Association of Family Resource Programs www.frpbc.ca

BC Confederation Of Parent Advisory Councils www.bccpac.bc.ca

BC Government Directory <http://dir.gov.bc.ca>

BC Government Home Page www.gov.bc.ca

BC Representative for Children and Youth www.rcybc.ca

Blank, Marty - Director of the Coalition for Community Schools. Search YouTube for “Comments on 2008 National Forum in Portland” and other community school videos www.youtube.com

Centre for Sustainable Community Development - SFU www.sfu.ca/cscd

The Children’s Aid Society, New York. www.childrensaidsociety.org Search YouTube for Children’s Aid Society videos. Many other community school resources can be found on the New York Children’s Aid Society web site

Coalition for Community Schools www.communityschools.org

Community Futures www.communityfutures.ca

Duncan, Arne - video on Charlie Rose TV show (YouTube) www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuO_nB7WY9w This video can also be accessed on The Coalition For Community Schools web site.

Early Years Study 2: Putting Science into Action www.councilcd.ca The Council site is closing in October 2010, but this report should continue to be available through a general online search.

First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition www.firstcallbc.org

Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) www.earlylearning.ubc.ca

Investing in Community Schools - An Economic Perspective www.acebc.org

Justice Institute of BC www.jibc.ca

Neighbourhood Learning Centres, BC Ministry of Education www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca

SchoolPlus (Sask.) www.education.gov.sk.ca/SchoolPLUS

Smart Growth BC www.smartgrowth.bc.ca

Surrey Presentation at Harrison Conference, 2009 www.acebc.org

Surrey Workshop with Abe Fernandez, New York Children’s Aid Society, 2009 www.acbc.org

United Way Lower Mainland www.uwlm.ca

Vancouver Board of Trade www.boardoftrade.com

Note: All links were accessed and active in September, 2010. If a link fails, try an Internet search, but if you have difficulty locating any of the resources, please contact Don Reimer, dwqb@shaw.ca in Qualicum Beach, BC.

© Don Reimer, 2009, 2010. Currently a board member of ACEbc, Don is a retired principal of community schools in the Prince George and Comox Valley school districts. Thanks to Bev George, Linda Myres, Sue Lamb, and Bill Preston for assistance and encouragement. Any errors are the responsibility of the author.

ACEbc is a non-profit society dedicated to fostering and promoting Community Education and Community Schools in British Columbia. ACEbc has been active in BC since 1975 in the areas of community education, community school development, advocacy and liaison, organization of workshops and conferences, publishing resource materials and conducting community school research.

**Caring today for tomorrow’s healthy, sustainable, learning communities
throughout British Columbia.**